



Habitats

Mississippi River; interior rivers and streams, natural lakes and prairie marshes

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

stonecat

Noturus flavus

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Family:	Cypriniformes
Order:	Ictaluridae

Features

The stonecat may reach a length of up to 12 inches, but rarely exceeds six to eight. It is yellowish green to olive above and light below. It has the characteristic eight barbels (whisker-like projections) around the mouth, spines in the pectoral and dorsal fins, and adipose (fat) fin in front of the tail fin. It also lacks scales. The barbels are yellow. As with other madtoms, there is a poison gland at the base of the pectoral fin that causes a burning sensation if you are pricked with the fin.

Natural History

The stonecat commonly is found in swift flowing streams. It occasionally is found in some of the natural lakes and the Mississippi River. It eats immature insects. It spawns in spring, building a nest and guarding the eggs and young. It prefers stream riffle habitats, but also can be found under rocks or along weedy shorelines of lakes or ponds.